



# The COURT COMPASS

NEWSLETTER OF THE MASSACHUSETTS JUDICIAL BRANCH

## New Computer System Will Boost Efficiency of Jury Management

Pamela J. Wood, who last November was appointed Jury Commissioner by the Supreme Judicial Court, is upgrading the process of providing jurors for the fifty-nine jury pools in Massachusetts courts.

During the next year, the Office of Jury Commissioner will procure and install a new computer system, called "Jury Plus Next Generation," which will connect new workstations at every jury pool and replace a 1979 mainframe computer system.

"It will make the jury management process much quicker and more efficient," Commissioner Wood said. "All juror summonses will have bar codes, which will be scanned in at the jury pool and allow us to track jurors in real time as they are assigned to specific courtrooms."

Under the nation's first One Day/One Trial system, which Massachusetts began implementing in 1980, jurors are available for

*Jury Commissioner* continued on page 3



Seated, from left, are Supreme Judicial Court Chief Justice Margaret H. Marshall; Court Management Advisory Board Chairman Michael B. Keating, and Chief Justice for Administration and Management Robert A. Mulligan. Standing, from left, are Board members Leo V. Boyle, Stephanie S. Lovell, Linda K. Carlisle, Anne Margulies, Thomas O'Brien, David Fubini, Hon. Neil L. Lynch, Janet Fine, Robert P. Gittens, Gene D. Dahmen, and Elizabeth Pattullo.

## Court Management Advisory Board Holds First Meeting

Supreme Judicial Court Chief Justice Margaret H. Marshall and Chief Justice for Administration and Management Robert A. Mulligan welcomed the twelve members of the Court Management Advisory Board at their initial meeting in Boston on June 15.

The Board, consisting of leaders of the legal profession, public administration, and business management, elected Michael B. Keating, a partner at Foley Hoag LLP and former president of the Boston Bar Association, as Chairman. The Board was formed in accordance with G.L. c. 211B, § 6A and as recommended in the 2003 Report of the Visiting Committee on Management in the Courts to advise the Justices of the Supreme Judicial Court and the Chief Justice for Administration and Management in their management of the Judicial Branch.

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## COMPASS COORDINATES: Taunton District Court



### Judges, Staff Handle Busy Caseload in Cramped, Outdated Courthouse

Taunton District Court Judicial Secretary Melissa Corr has a view of the criminal justice system unlike any other in the Commonwealth. Since 1998, every detainee who has appeared in the main courtroom has gotten there by walking within two feet of her desk.

Because of a severe lack of office space in the 184-year-old Courthouse, Ms. Corr works in a second-floor corridor leading to the back of the main courtroom. Each day the Court is open, law enforcement officers escort handcuffed and shackled detainees down the corridor, turning left at one corner of her desk, to enter a doorway approximately six feet from her office chair.

On the other side of the door is a small security room where detainees are transferred from the supervision of either a police or sheriff's department, to that of Taunton court officers. The procedure involves removing the handcuffs and shackles belonging to the law enforcement agency and replacing them with the Court's restraints. In most courthouses, such transfers take place in a basement lock-up away from judges, court staff, and the public.

"It can be very hectic here and it is difficult to concentrate. People in custody can get loud, yelling back and forth, and the language is awful," Ms. Corr said. "You just have to always be alert and aware of what's going on around you so you know when to get out. When I know there's going to be a situation, I go to the judges lobby."



First Justice Kevan J. Cunningham presides over a busy first session, as about a dozen detainees wait in the dock for their cases to be called.



Probation Case Specialist Nancy Persson works at her desk in office space shared with four colleagues.

She estimates that "situations," in which a detainee may require physical restraint by a court officer, occur about once every one or two weeks.

She also has to remain vigilant about where she keeps objects such as a letter opener. "I can't keep anything on my desk because a detainee may try to grab it and use it as a weapon," she said. "Whenever I use something I always remember to put it away."

Head Administrative Assistant Vivian Fitzgerald, whose desk is in a separate room about 20 feet away, added that she, too, can hear every-

thing that occurs in the security room. "Melissa's a very good sport to put up with it," she said. "Unfortunately, that's the only place in this courthouse where we can put her desk."

Ms. Corr said that on most days she simply takes her situation in stride. "There's nowhere else to go in this building, and we have no lock-up. I just come to work expecting something to happen every day, and sometimes it does."

### COMPASS COORDINATES

**This new feature of The Court Compass will spotlight courts throughout Massachusetts. Suggestions are welcome for future feature articles.**

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Chief Justice Marshall said, "I am deeply grateful to the members of the Court Management Advisory Board who have generously agreed to assist the judiciary in the area of management reform. These are talented, experienced leaders in their chosen fields who will bring fresh perspective and management expertise to help the courts continue to improve the administration of justice at every level of the court system."

The members of the Board are: Leo V. Boyle, a partner at Meehan, Boyle, Black & Fitzgerald in Boston; Linda K. Carlisle, a management consultant to public and non-profit clients and former Commissioner of the Department of Social Services; Gene D. Dahmen, a partner with Deutsch Williams Brooks DeRensis & Holland, P.C. in Boston and former President of the Boston Bar Association; Janet Fine, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance; David Fubini, Director of the Boston office of McKinsey & Company; Robert P. Gittens, Vice President for Public Affairs at Northeastern University; Stephanie S. Lovell, First Assistant Attorney General of Massachusetts; Supreme Judicial Court Justice Neil L. Lynch (retired), Settlement Counsel for the First Circuit of the United States Court of Appeals; Anne Margulies, Executive Director of OpenCourseWare at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Thomas O'Brien, Dean of the Eugene M. Isenberg School of Management at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst; and Elizabeth Pattullo, President and Chief Executive Officer of Beacon Health Strategies. ■



Jury Commissioner Pamela J. Wood, seated at center, with the staff of the Office of Jury Commissioner. The senior staff members are, seated from left, Legal Counsel John P. Mulvee, Jury Census Manager Gregory W.R. Fulchino, Operations Manager-Administration Janice E. McDermott, and Operations Manager-Operations John Cavanaugh.

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assignment to jury trials throughout the day. The method of tracking jurors' availability is presently a cumbersome process of constantly modifying written lists.

"With the new scanning system, jurors' availability will be immediately known as soon as they return from a courtroom to the jury pool room, and they can immediately be assigned to another courtroom," Commissioner Wood said. The system's increased efficiency will enable the Office of Jury Commissioner to summons fewer jurors for every jury trial in the Commonwealth.

Another part of the technological upgrade will be improvements to the Jury Commission Website, [www.-MassJury.com](http://www.-MassJury.com). The site will be more interactive, allowing potential jurors to confirm service, request postponements or disqualifications, and correct information, such as home addresses.

"Everyone is very eager to implement the new system," Commissioner Wood said. "The court officers have

been especially helpful in documenting the specific duties of operating a jury pool. At every court I've been to, everyone wants to be the first to pilot the system. It's been very gratifying."

The Office of Jury Commissioner also has begun publishing an electronic newsletter, called OJC Update. The first edition was emailed to 350 judges, court employees, and legislators in May.

"We're always looking for ways to improve communication between this office and those we serve, including jurors, judges, court staff, and the general public," Commissioner Wood said. "OJC Update is designed to share current information about matters pertaining to jurors and the jury system."

The first edition includes information about the technological upgrade, the resumption of Friday jury sessions in Boston, Cambridge, Springfield and Worcester, and jury cancellations in downtown Boston during the Democratic National Convention in July. ■



## Taunton District Court

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## Security Concerns

First Justice Kevan J. Cunningham has long identified security as his highest administrative priority. "Security is always a concern," he said. "We're the eleventh busiest District Court in the Commonwealth, and we have no lock-up, but we have defendants here who are accused of some very serious crimes."

Chief Court Officer Teddy Cioper said that associate court officers staffing the metal detector at the front door have confiscated hundreds of weapons, mostly knives. No weapons have been found inside the courthouse, although court officers regularly find contraband including drugs, cigarettes, and syringes in the rest room used by male detainees.

"The public has access to the restroom, where they try to stash contraband for a prisoner," he said. He explained that because the courthouse has no lock-up, detainees remain chained to a bar in the dock of the courtroom until they can be picked up by a police officer or sheriff's deputy. If they need to use the restroom, they are taken individually to the one that is accessible by the public.

"The reason we haven't had any major security incidents here is that the court officers do an outstanding job," Judge Cunningham said. "They are very good at keeping people separated who need to be, such as victims from defendants or problematic defendants away from each other, but the physical plant makes the job very difficult."



In fiscal year 2003, 5,699 criminal complaints were entered in Taunton District Court, making it one of the busiest in Massachusetts.

**'This Court is run very well.  
... Staff get here at seven in  
the morning to prepare, so  
that by the time I arrive  
everybody is ready to run.  
They are understaffed and  
the conditions are not good,  
but the employees always  
rise to the occasion.'**

— District Court Judge  
Emogene Johnson-Smith

## Everyday Obstacles

In addition to the security concerns, the crowded conditions of the courthouse present other challenges to the court staff, attorneys, and the public.

Clerk-Magistrate Raymond S. Peck said as many as forty small claims cases may be heard in offices in the courthouse basement in a single day.

"Often there will be forty to fifty people waiting in the hall outside my office," he said, pointing to an area that seats ten people. "It's been a tough go here because of the structure of the courthouse."

The second courtroom has space for ten chairs in addition to seating for the judge, a clerk, two attorneys and a witness.

Every day the main hallway is crowded with dozens of people appearing in court. Attorneys have nowhere to go for private meetings with their clients, so consultations are conducted in the hallways, stairwells, and in the courtroom itself. Files older than two

years are stored in the courthouse attic and in cardboard boxes and shelving lining the basement, approximately half of which has a dirt floor. In the Probation Office and the Clerk's Office, four desks fill space suitable for two desks.

Not everyone, however, has a desk. In Ms. Fitzgerald's office, which is approximately ten feet by ten feet, a shelving unit and a footstool stored behind her open office door constitute a miniature office that is used daily. Following a session in the main courtroom, clerks sit on the footstool and finish their paperwork on their lap because there is nowhere else to do it.

To reach the footstool, a clerk has to go through another hallway that doubles as an office. Judicial Secretary Brenda Barbosa's desk is positioned in a corner of the corridor, leaving fifteen

## Appeals Court Celebrates Elimination of Backlog of 1,400 Cases

The Massachusetts Appeals Court celebrated the elimination of its appellate case backlog at a breakfast reception on June 11, during which Chief Justice Christopher J. Armstrong on behalf of the Court thanked the legislators, members of the bar, executive branch leaders, and media members who supported the Court's efforts to increase the number of Justices.

Legislation enacted in 2000 expanded the Court from fourteen Justices to twenty-five Justices. At that time, approximately 1,400 cases on appeal had a waiting time of twenty-two months for civil cases and about fourteen months for criminal cases to be heard or considered by the Justices. Now cases progress from the filing of parties' legal briefs to oral argument or consideration by the Court in five months.

"Our goal to eliminate the case backlog has been achieved because of the steadfast determination of our



At at the Appeals Court reception, from left, are: State Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty; Appeals Court Chief Justice Christopher J. Armstrong; Speaker of the House Thomas M. Finneran; Supreme Judicial Court Chief Justice Margaret H. Marshall; State Senator Robert S. Creedon, Jr.; Superior Court Chief Justice Suzanne DelVecchio; and Appeals Court Justice David A. Mills.

judges and staff, but we could not have accomplished our mission without the aid and support of bar leaders and other lawyers, executive and legislative branch leaders, and the editors of

many media outlets, who recognized our Court's dire need for more resources to administer justice. We are grateful to all of them," Chief Justice Armstrong said.

*Taunton District Court*

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inches of space between a corner of the desk and the opposite corridor wall. It is almost physically impossible to reach Ms. Fitzgerald's office or the judge's lobby beyond it without brushing against Ms. Barbosa's computer monitor.

"My desk has been on TV," Ms. Barbosa said with a laugh, recalling a news story about the courthouse. "But I like my desk. Maybe it sounds a little sad, but this is the only office I've known."

### Handicapped Access

Judges and staff are particularly attentive to the needs of disabled litigants, attorneys, and other visitors

because of conditions at the courthouse. Information identifying the Court's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinators, Assistant Chief Probation Officer Carol Sylvia and Ms. Fitzgerald, is posted outside the courthouse and is included with every letter sent from the court. The ADA coordinators schedule hearings requiring handicapped access in the nearby Superior Court, which is equipped with a wheelchair ramp and has handicapped parking spaces directly in front of the building.

"We schedule about four or five hearings in the Superior Court every month," Ms. Sylvia said. "It works out very well. The court officers are very

attentive to anyone outside the courthouse who needs assistance."

As with handicapped access, the Taunton District Court judges and staff confront the everyday obstacles of working in a building designed to meet the judicial needs of the 19th century. "This Court is run very well," said Judge Emogene Johnson-Smith, who hears cases in many courthouses throughout southeastern Massachusetts.

"Staff get here at seven in the morning to prepare, so that by the time I arrive everybody is ready to run. They are understaffed and the conditions are not good, but the employees always rise to the occasion." ■

# Orange District Court Celebrates New Courthouse, As Work Progresses in Worcester and Boston

Judges, staff, and many guests, including legislators, court leaders, attorneys, community leaders, and members of the public, celebrated the newly renovated Orange District Court with a festive ribbon-cutting ceremony on June 24.

"Everyone is just amazed at the improvements," said First Justice David S. Ross. "There is a different spirit among people who spend time here. The clean, organized, and safe environment is important to court staff. The renovated facility is welcoming to the public. More than ever, the building helps to extend the message that the court is in a position to execute its responsibilities in administering justice."

The Court occupies four of the five stories in the building. Starting in mid-2002, the building was completely renovated one floor at a time as the Court continued to operate in it.

The renovated Courthouse is handicapped-accessible, has two courtrooms, one of which is equipped for jury trials; a large jury pool room and jury deliberation room; a law library; three judge's lobbies; and private conference rooms for attorneys and their clients. There is also separate space for use by the Juvenile Court, the Probate and Family Court, and the Housing Court as needed.

Security features have been modernized, including the installation of a separate elevator for detainees and court staff, a secure lock-up with five cells, a more spacious entry area equipped with security systems, an enclosed dock for detainees in the main courtroom, and separate rooms for people applying for abuse prevention orders and for witnesses waiting to testify.

## New Worcester Trial Court

A groundbreaking ceremony for the New Worcester Trial Court was held June 25, marking the start of con-



The renovated main courtroom at Orange District Court includes a secure dock, at left, for holding detainees during their court sessions.

struction of the new home for the Worcester District Court, Worcester Housing Court, Worcester Probate and Family Court, Worcester Juvenile Court, and Worcester Superior Court. There will be 26 courtrooms, a grand jury room, offices, hearing rooms, public lobbies, and secure holding facilities. The building, which will be the largest court facility in the state, is scheduled for completion in 2007.

## John Adams Courthouse

The Courthouse at Pemberton Square in downtown Boston, which will house the Supreme Judicial Court, the Appeals Court, and the Social Law Library, is scheduled to be finished this year. Renovation of the 200-year-old Courthouse included extensive work to the exterior façade and roof.

The interior features have been restored to their original grandeur,

including marble floors, oak paneling, and the frescoed, vaulted ceiling of the Great Hall, while modern security, information technology, lighting and mechanical systems are being added.

## Edward W. Brooke Courthouse

The Brooke Courthouse is being renovated to accommodate the Boston Municipal Court, which is moving from its current location in the John W. McCormack Courthouse. Work is scheduled to be completed by the end of the year.

The Central Division of the Boston Municipal Court will have seven courtrooms, as well as space for the Administrative Office, Probation Office, Clerk's Office, Juvenile Court Clinic, and other court-related agencies such as the District Attorney's Office and the Department of Social Services.



## COMPASS POINTS



### West Roxbury Court Wins Award for Better Government

The West Roxbury Division of the Boston Municipal Court has won a 2004 Better Government Competition Award from the Pioneer Institute for its Reinventing Justice Project.

The Project encompasses a wide range of collaborative initiatives undertaken by the Court and members of the West Roxbury community.

First Justice Kathleen E. Coffey said, "I am honored and delighted with the recognition received from the Pioneer Institute. The Reinventing Justice Program is a strong community collaboration. The energy, enthusiasm, and creativity of our members have enabled the Court to improve the deliv-

ery of court services by making us more accessible, accountable, and responsive to the needs of the diverse and culturally rich neighborhoods we serve within the City of Boston. My colleague and co-chair Judge Robert Rufo, along with probation officers Helen Brown, Mary Tracy-Walsh, former Chief of Probation Tony Owens, and Chief Court Officer Jack Cahill have greatly contributed to all our initiatives and must be credited with the Program's success."

### Superior Court Judge Nonnie S. Burnes Recognized for Children's Education Program

Superior Court Judge Nonnie S. Burnes has been named the first recipient of the Richard J. Testa Visionary

Award by the non-profit organization Discovering Justice: The James D. St. Clair Court Education Project.

Judge Burnes received the award in recognition of her outstanding efforts in helping Discovering Justice launch the Children Discovering Justice Program in 2000.

The Program consists of an eight-week curriculum for elementary students taught in more than 110 classrooms in Boston, Brockton, and Milton. The curriculum, which teaches children about the vital role of the judicial system in American democracy, culminates in a visit to the John J. Moakley U.S. Courthouse in Boston, where Discovering Justice is based.

### Chief Justices Laud Outstanding Efforts of 15 Trial Court Employees

The 2004 Trial Court Employee of the Year and the fourteen recipients of Employee Excellence Awards were honored for their outstanding service during a gala celebration at the MIT Endicott House in Dedham on May 26. Attending the ceremony were Chief Justices, judges, senior court staff, honorees' coworkers, friends and family members, including Supreme Judicial Court Chief Justice Margaret H. Marshall, Chief Justice for Administration and Management Robert A. Mulligan, and the Chief Justices of the seven Trial Court Departments.

Seated from left are: Boston Housing Court Acting Office Manager Andrea L. Gomes; Gardner District Court Head Administrative Assistant Laura A. Maldonado; Court Officer June T. Kelly of Norfolk Superior Court, the 2004 Employee of the Year; Boston Municipal Court Secretary to the Justices Janet M. Higgins; and AOTC Information Technology Department Associate User Support Analyst Sharon A. Neal.

Standing in the second row are: Barnstable Superior Court Official Court



Reporter Daniel E. Horgan; Land Court Account Clerk II Camilla M. Urban; New Bedford District Court Case Coordinator II Patricia A. Lunny; Norfolk Probate & Family Court Case Specialist Robert A. Abaid; Hampshire Probate & Family Court Office Manager Kathleen Parent; Boston Juvenile Court Probation Office Acting Office Manager Juliet E. Farrell; and AOTC Court

Facilities Bureau Custodian Louis A. Casale.

Standing in the third row are: Essex Probate & Family Court Assistant Chief Probation Officer Brian Monaghan; Chief Justice Mulligan; Chief Justice Marshall; Middlesex Juvenile Court Assistant Chief Probation Officer Stephen L. Allsopp; and Middlesex Superior Court Court Officer II Ronald D. Costa.

## Trial Court Honors Employees with Forty Years of Service



Chief Justice for Administration and Management Robert A. Mulligan hosted a luncheon on May 20 to honor employees whose length of service to the Trial Court surpassed forty years since the previous luncheon, held in November, 2001. Honorees included, in the top row from left: Robert Tomasone, Kevin Murphy, and Edward Cisternelli. In the second row, from left, are: Gerard Kenneally, James Rush, Judith Trocki, and Lorraine Antosca. In the third row, from left, are: Jeanne Brochu, Joseph Ligotti, and Margaret Farmer. In the fourth row, from left, are: Chief Justice Mulligan, Patricia Minnoti, Robert Panneton, and Timothy Tobin, Jr. In front is Jeanne Frullo. In the inset photo is James Monahan, who has worked for the Supreme Judicial Court since 1964.

### Trial Court

**Janet L. Alger**, Case Specialist,  
Brockton District Court

**Lorraine Antosca**, Assistant  
Clerk-Magistrate, Suffolk  
Superior Court

**Jeanne A. Brochu**, Assistant  
Court Service Coordinator,  
Office of the Commissioner of  
Probation

**Edward G. Cisternelli**, Assist-  
ant Chief Probation Officer,  
Norfolk Superior Court

**James E. Day**, Assistant Chief  
Probation Officer, Woburn  
District Court

**Edward T. Dever**, Chief Court  
Officer, Middlesex Superior  
Court

**Margaret A. Farmer**, Second  
Assistant Clerk-Magistrate,  
Salem District Court

**Marcia Fogarty**, Operations  
Supervisor, Framingham  
District Court

**Jeanne A. Frullo**, Office  
Manager, Marlborough  
District Court

**Paul J. Hartnett**, Clerk-  
Magistrate, Middlesex  
Juvenile Court

**Gerard F. Kenneally**,  
Probation Officer, Norfolk  
Superior Court

**Joseph A. Ligotti**, Clerk-Magi-  
strate, Hingham District Court

**Elaine R. Lombardi**,  
Assistant Clerk-Magistrate,  
Suffolk Superior Court

**Patricia D. Minotti**, Head  
Administrative Assistant,  
Barnstable District Court

**Donald T. Moran**, Field  
Services Supervisor, Office of  
the Commissioner of Probation

**Kevin Murphy**, Clerk-Magi-  
strate, Chelsea District Court

**Robert Panneton**, Chief of  
Staff, Administrative Office of  
the Trial Court

**James J. Rush**, Assistant  
Chief Probation Officer, West  
Roxbury Municipal Court

**George L. Shea, Jr.**, Assistant  
Clerk-Magistrate, Boston Muni-  
cipal Court Central Division

**Timothy F. Tobin, Jr.**, Third  
Assistant Clerk-Magistrate,  
Hingham District Court

**Robert A. Tomasone**, Clerk-  
Magistrate, Somerville District  
Court

**Judith Trocki**, Assistant  
Clerk-Magistrate, Suffolk  
Superior Court

### Supreme Judicial Court

**James Monahan**, Court  
Services Coordinator

## Thanks to Readers for Comments and Ideas

The editors of The Court Compass thank the several hundred readers who responded to our recent Reader Survey.

We are very pleased by both the number of people who took the time to fill out the survey, and with the quality and helpfulness of their responses. We will be using many of your suggestions as our guide as we introduce new features and make other changes in future editions of The Court Compass.

## The Court Compass

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